



Links Players

Slow Down and Feel

Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. (Matthew 11:29, NIV)

“You clicked into a different gear on that one,” I quipped at my Legends Tour friend on our final hole of the Arizona Women’s Senior Team event. Laughter covered the 18th tee box as I pushed my tee into the ground. I felt the tension begin to circle in my chest. One more birdie would be nice on the scorecard for my team, and the tee shot was important.

Settling into my routine, I picked my target. “I got this,” I whispered to myself. My goal for the day had been to stay in the moment. As my tee shot compressed off my driver, I yelled, “Chase Ashli’s ball.” I walked off the tee with a smile.

I have been working on paying attention to the stress activation and the negative beliefs that surface when I’m in competition (and in life). I am my own worst enemy. My words berate with verbal assaults. Even after four decades of competitive golf, I am still in the process.

God gave us the ability to think and reason, but he also gave us incredible bodies that experience the world through our five senses. Our bodies (nervous systems) often hold negative memories causing us to react to current circumstances and relationships with self-protection, defensiveness, or pride.

Maybe harsh words have rolled off your tongue before you knew what was happening? Has conflict ignited a need to defend rather than enter with curiosity? Does your pride leave you feeling valued or alone? In our humanity, we are not immune to any of these behaviors.

Peter, one of Jesus’ inner circle disciples, was no different. We witness his self-protection, defensiveness, and pride on multiple occasions. “And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him...(Matthew 16:22 ESV).” “You shall never wash my feet (John 13:8 ESV).” “Though they all fall away because of you, I will never fall away (Matthew 26.33 ESV).” Each time Jesus responded with gentleness and humility.

When the rooster crowed, Peter’s eyes were opened, and his sorrow wept. Not too many days later, Jesus stood on the shore of the Sea of Galilee and invited Peter to pause and consider his heart. Jesus engaged Peter on a heart level, not a knowledge level.

Jesus knows we carry the wounds done to us and the ways in which we have harmed others in our bodies. Healing begins when we slow down, to be honest about our pain and sorrow. Jesus didn’t ask Peter one time if he loved him, but three times. Healing our hurts is a layered and ongoing journey.

Rest for our souls is available. Jesus longs for us to slow down and pay attention to our burdens. Your emotions and feelings are worth consideration.

Caring for our souls is the precursor to bringing hope and healing to others. It is the pathway to being gentle and humble in heart like Jesus.

Prayer: Lord, will you help me slow down and consider what I feel and the burdens I am carrying. Help me be honest and live with a gentle and humble heart.

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Tracy Hanson

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